

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT, HO

SUBJECT: INTERNAL LIBERAL ELECTIONS

BEGIN SUMMARY. INTERNAL LIBERAL PARTY ELECTIONS WERE HELD ON SEPTEMBER 12. MODESTO RODAS ALVARADO AND HIS FOLLOWERS WON APPROXIMATELY 80 PERCENT OF THE 109 MUNICIPAL COUNCILS IN CONTENTION. RODAS' VICTORY ENSURES THAT HE WILL BE THE PARTY LEADER IN THE PERIOD LEADING UP TO THE 1979 ELECTIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. THE LIBERAL PARTY HELD PARTY ELECTIONS ON SEPTEMBER 12 FOR 109 MUNICIPAL PARTY COUNCILS. THE GOVERNMENT PERMITTED THE ELECTIONS TO TAKE PLACE BECAUSE IT WAS AN INTERNAL ELECTION AND NO LARGE MEETINGS OR DEMONSTRATIONS WERE INVOLVED.

2. IN ESSENCE, THE ELECTION WAS A CONTEST BETWEEN MODESTO RODAS ALVARADO VS. THE "DEMOCRATIC LEFT" LED BY CARLOS ROBERTO REINA AND JORGE BUESO ARIAS AND THE SAN PEDRO SULA-BASED "VILLEDA MORALES MOVEMENT" HEADED BY EDMOND BOGRAN. THE RODISTAS GAINED CONTROL OF THE PARTY MACHINERY IN THE 1974 CONVENTION AND HAVE BEEN SEEKING TO CONSOLIDATE THEIR STRENGTH WITHIN THE PARTY SINCE THAT TIME. THE SEPTEMBER 12 ELECTIONS, THEREFORE, WERE A TEST OF HOW THE TWO GROUPINGS HAVE SUCCEEDED IN DEVELOPING INTERNAL PARTY SUPPORT. THE RESULTS SHOWED THAT RODAS HAS STRENGTHENED HIS GRIP ON THE PARTY BECAUSE HIS SUPPORTERS WON AN ESTIMATED 80 PERCENT OF THE

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MUNICIPALITIES IN QUESTION. BOTH SIDES ACCUSED ONE ANOTHER OF

IMPROPER AND FRADULENT ACTIVITIES IN THE SAN PEDRO SULA VOTING AND
THE ACCUSATIONS WERE AIRED IN THE PRESS.

3. BEGIN COMMENT. THERE SEEMS LITTLE DOUBT THAT RODAS WILL
CONTINUE TO CONTROL THE PARTY FOR THE FORSEEABLE FUTURE. THE
OPPOSITION FORCES LED BY REINA, BUESO AND BOGRAN WILL REMAIN IN
BEING BUT WITH LITTLE IN THE WAY OF SIGNIFICANT SUPPORT EXCEPT
FOR CONTROL OF SCATTERED MUNICIPALITIES. THEREFORE, IT IS RODAS
WHO WILL BE THE PARTY LEADER IN THE PERIOD LEADING UP TO THE 1979
ELECTIONS AND WHO WILL DICTATE THE PARTY'S POLICIES DURING THAT
TIME. END COMMENT.

BARTCH

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